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W.A.T.C.H.'s Annual 2020 Summer Safety Report **For Parents and Caregivers**

W.A.T.C.H.'s SUMMER SAFETY TIPS

TO KEEP KIDS SAFE FROM INJURIES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

IMPACT INJURIES, SHALLOW WATER TRAPS AND OTHER BACKYARD SAFETY HAZARDS TOP W.A.T.C.H.'S LIST OF 10 POTENTIAL AT-HOME SUMMER SAFETY CONCERNS WITH KIDS

(Boston, MA- June 17, 2020) With kids spending more time playing at home during the Covid-19 pandemic, World Against Toys Causing Harm, Inc. (W.A.T.C.H.) kicks off the summer with important safety information to help parents and caregivers navigate the summer safely.

In this unprecedented time of social distancing to curb the spread of COVID-19, the arrival of warmer weather and summer activities is also the beginning of the new normal. Differentiating this summer from any other year, with many camps and sports cancelled and local playgrounds and community centers closed, more outdoor activities will be closer to home. Consumer Advocates Joan E. Siff, President of W.A.T.C.H., and James A. Swartz, Director of W.A.T.C.H., showcase **10 Top "Summer Safety Traps"** as representative of some of the many different types of hazards families can avoid to safeguard children at a time when kids will be spending more hours than before running, jumping, and swimming close to home. **(SEE ATTACHED LIST).**

The warm weather, combined with school vacation and virtual camps, is a time for **kids to enjoy the outdoors**, but it can also be a time for injuries. During the summer months, traumatic injuries to children more than double.ⁱ Most preventable injuries to children take place near homes and communities, including an estimated 75% (125,300) of injury-related deaths in 2018.ⁱⁱ Siff said, "One concern is that limited summer options will translate into an even greater surge in at-home injuries, so it **remains critical for families to be familiar with what safety traps to avoid to help kids have a fun summer.**"

eCommerce: Stay-At-Home Has Become Synonymous With Shopping Online

During COVID-19, when store closings and stay-at-home orders suddenly transitioned online shopping from a convenient luxury to a necessity, online sales skyrocketed. Almost overnight UPS, Federal Express and Amazon delivery trucks drastically multiplied on otherwise empty roads. In March, eCommerce sales were up 74% compared to the year beforeⁱⁱⁱ. However, when it comes to identifying safety traps for children’s products, e-shoppers need to take precautions. Ordering online, shoppers face the disadvantage of not being able to physically examine the toy at the time of purchase. Some online product descriptions may omit warnings and cautions or provide incomplete or misleading information. Furthermore, unsafe or recalled toys may resurface on second-hand online sites. **W.A.T.C.H. wants to remind the many families relying on online shopping during this time to thoroughly inspect a toy and its packaging for warning signs of obvious hazards before giving it to a child.**

Yard-Based Toys and Sports Equipment: Increased Sales Could Mean Increased Injuries

There is much that parents may not be able to control during COVID-19 and families are relying on manufacturers more heavily than ever to make sure their children’s toys and outdoor recreational equipment are designed with safety as the top priority. As the cooler weather is replaced with rising temperatures, the focus on in-home games popular with kids during quarantine will likely switch to outdoor and yard-based activities. Families interested in avoiding crowded spaces are looking for alternatives to public playgrounds and swimming areas to keep kids active closer to home. Sales of outdoor and sports toys in April increased 51 percent over the same time period last year.^{iv} Ride-on toys, backyard playsets, and pools, to name a few, are among the hot items.

W.A.T.C.H. wants to keep parents and caregivers informed about some popular backyard activities that have been linked to devastating injuries so they can make more informed decisions when choosing products for their at-home, impromptu summer “camps.” It is unacceptable that every year children are unnecessarily injured by defective products that are designed, manufactured or marketed improperly. **“Do not be lulled into a false sense of security that a toy or activity is safe simply because it is popular,”** said Swartz. For many years, W.A.T.C.H. has warned families about the catastrophic injuries associated with **backyard trampolines** including fractures and cervical spine trauma. Adults and teens have been warned not to use popular in-ground water slides, like the traditional **lawn slip and slide**, due to the risk of life-threatening injuries, including paralysis. Other safety hazards highlighted in this year’s Summer Safety Report include **water-related safety traps** and **non-motorized scooters**, a repeat offender associated with the most toy-related injuries. It’s no surprise that with many outdoor summer programs being shut down or going virtual, hospitals have reported a rise in injuries related to trampolines and other activities taking place near home, such as **biking**, whereas normally there may be more fractures related to injuries from organized sports.^v

Backyard Water Traps: Camps May be Virtual, but Water Hazards Remain Real

As families forgo populated pools and beaches to cool down this summer, backyard water safety remains a vitally important issue. Recently, the CPSC reported a steady rise in fatal child drownings.^{vi} Most fatal drownings take place at homes during the summer.^{vii} Almost two thirds of fatal drownings to children occur during the spring and summer months.^{viii} Each year from 2015 to 2017, there were about 379 kids younger than 15 years old who died in pool- or spa-related drownings. In addition, between 2017 and 2019, about 18 children every day (estimated 6,700 children) were seen in hospitals for pool- or spa-related nonfatal submersion injuries.^{ix} The number of children that drown in backyard pools each summer highlights the importance of raising awareness about water safety.

W.A.T.C.H. is alerting parents to be vigilant when kids are near water. **“One of our goals today is to be proactive and raise awareness about water safety, including those hazards that may not be widely known such as water rings that can flip over trapping a child’s head under water, pool floats that can block the view of a child in distress, or baby pools that collect rainwater,”** said Siff and Swartz. It takes just moments for an accident to happen. Checking water safety measures at home is an important way to kick-off the summer.

Safety Spotlight: Toys Are Only Game In Town With Many Sports And Camps Cancelled

Cancellation of group sports and park closings have increased the demand for toys that help keep kids active. Although intended for fun and entertainment, many toys contain hidden hazards unnecessarily putting children at risk of injury or death. **Swartz cautioned, “Unfortunately, we see some of the same potential hazards, hazards that should be well known to the industry, reappear year after year.”** There were an estimated 226,100 toy-related injuries treated at U.S. hospitals in 2018.^x

Addressed in W.A.T.C.H.’s recent [47th Annual “10 Worst Toys” Report](#) as well as this year’s **Summer Safety Report** are toys that encourage children to jump with the potential for head or impact injuries. **Pogo stick hybrids** with foam bases are one example of toys that may be appealing to keep energetic children occupied. However, some jumping toys are sold without the proper safety gear or marketed with inconsistent safety messages. Other toys, such as **high-powered water guns**, may have the potential to fire with enough force to cause eye injuries. **Water balloon slingshots** remain popular but pose the potential dual threat of blunt force trauma to eyes and choking hazards for young children.

The increased usage of toys and games during the coronavirus pandemic, and families’ increased dependence on the safety of these products, highlights the importance of the safety messages W.A.T.C.H. has been promoting for years. While informing families about the dangers of small parts and other traditional toy hazards, such as toys with long strings and sharp edges sold to babies, W.A.T.C.H. works year-round to reduce preventable injuries to children. W.A.T.C.H. encourages safer manufacture, design and marketing of products before they enter the channels of commerce and promotes increased transparency and reporting by manufacturers when safety

issues arise. Nonetheless, **Siff and Swartz noted every year there are often millions of units of toys recalled for hazards such as choking, strangulation, burns, blunt force trauma, and poisoning, after they have been available for sale.** Already this year in a four-month period, there have been twenty (20) recalls representing over six million (6,008,105) units of toys and other children’s products polluting the market in the U.S..^{xi} One recall is the **Musical Lili Llama**^{xii} with small parts that could detach, posing a choking hazard. **Swartz said, “During a time when toy usage will drastically increase, immediate action is needed to purge the market of hazards well-known to the industry, like small parts for young children, before even more children are unnecessarily exposed to the risk of harm.”** Recalls are important safety measures, but often occur only after the product is in the hands of unsuspecting children who may suffer serious, even life-threatening injuries. The difficulty in purging the market of goods that have been recalled shows that, while recalls are necessary, they are not a cure-all. **Siff and Swartz advise parents to remember to regularly examine the toys in their child’s toy box.**

Safety: Home Alone But Demanding Safer Products Together

The bottom line is that there are fewer options for summer fun within communities, kids are using more recreational products more often, and families are depending on the safety of these products. However, continued injuries and deaths to children from popular warm-weather backyard activities, drowning, toys with small parts and other hazards reveal the urgent need for increased awareness, safer products, better pre-market testing, and a more responsible market to help prevent injuries. In the meantime, **Siff advised, “Parents can avoid many hazards at home relating to popular toys and recreational activities by remaining vigilant, knowing the facts, and identifying safety red flags.”**

Social isolation does not mean families are on their own when it comes to safety. Through W.A.T.C.H.’s **#SHOUTsafety** campaign and other efforts, W.A.T.C.H. emphasizes the importance of sharing information and raising awareness about products with a track record of injuries and deaths to save lives and reduce preventable injuries. Increased dissemination of timely and detailed information about safety issues allows more consumers to make informed decisions when choosing children’s products and activities.

W.A.T.C.H.’s Summer Safety Report addresses safety traps to consider with the likely increase of yard-based recreational products, sports equipment and backyard water activities so kids can avoid injuries, have fun, and keep cool. **Children’s summer safety in the time of the pandemic is particularly challenging, but the concrete information provided by W.A.T.C.H. can increase awareness and help keep your kids safe:**

- i <https://www.nsc.org/in-the-newsroom/when-it-comes-to-accidental-deaths-united-states-is-approaching-deadliest-stretch-of-the-year>
- ii <https://injuryfacts.nsc.org/home-and-community/home-and-community-overview/introduction/>
- iii <https://apnews.com/Business%20Wire/b6847791fbed49af98a47d1dc6293a7>
- iv <https://www.npd.com/wps/portal/npd/us/news/press-releases/2020/the-mpd-group-sales-of-outdoor-and-sports-toys-surge-as-families-take-refuge-in-their-backyards/>
- v <https://philadelphia.cbslocal.com/2020/05/29/accidental-injuries-among-children-at-home-on-rise-during-pandemic-chop-research-shows/>, https://www.newswise.com/coronavirus/pediatric-injuries-in-the-home-are-on-the-rise/?article_id=732517
- vi <https://www.cpsc.gov/Newsroom/News-Releases/2020/New-CPSC-Report-Finds-Steady-Rise-in-Fatal-Child-Drownings>
- vii [New CPSC Report Finds Steady Rise in Fatal Child Drownings _ CPSC.gov](https://www.cpsc.gov/Newsroom/News-Releases/2020/New-CPSC-Report-Finds-Steady-Rise-in-Fatal-Child-Drownings)
- viii <https://www.ncfrp.org/wp-content/uploads/NCRPCD-Docs/Keeping-Kids-Safe-in-and-Around-Water-Report-2016.pdf>
- ix [New CPSC Report Finds Steady Rise in Fatal Child Drownings _ CPSC.gov](https://www.cpsc.gov/Newsroom/News-Releases/2020/New-CPSC-Report-Finds-Steady-Rise-in-Fatal-Child-Drownings)
- x https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/Toy_Related_Deaths_and_Injuries_Calendar_Year_2018.pdf?WM0sDY9UaFK2MpzOxpBoqmqPvoUdbzDN
- xi https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/Toy_Related_Deaths_and_Injuries_Calendar_Year_2018.pdf?WM0sDY9UaFK2MpzOxpBoqmqPvoUdbzDN
- xii <https://www.cpsc.gov/Recalls/2020/Manhattan-Toy-Recalls-Musical-Lilli-Llama-Due-to-Choking-Hazard>





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W.A.T.C.H.'S "10 TOP SUMMER SAFETY TRAPS" FOR 2020

Safety Tips to Keep Children Safe from Injuries

During the COVID-19 Pandemic

This year skate swings, hybrid pogo sticks and in-ground water slides illustrate some of the many potential hazards to watch out for so children can have a safer summer.

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Trap #1

Stand-On Hybrid Toys: Foam Pogo Sticks, Caster Skates, Hover Skates



<p>COVID-19 IMPACT:</p>	<p><i>Sports activities and games see a 25% gain as many organized sports are on hold.ⁱ</i></p>
<p>HAZARD:</p>	<p><i>Potential for Fall, Head and Impact Injuries</i></p>
<p>W.A.T.C.H. OUT!</p>	<p>During this unprecedented summer, when kids have more time at home due to COVID-19 related social distancing guidelines, families are buying additional toys to keep kids occupied. Parents and kids may be drawn to new variations of traditional toys (i.e. foam-based pogo sticks, electric hover skates, caster skates) as they plan ways to fill the gap between the end of virtual school and cancelled summer programs. But beware, some hybrid toys may be an invitation for injury. Although toys can be marketed as entertaining ways to bounce or glide, many such toys could present a serious risk of head or other impact injuries from falls. Some of these toys are marketed without the proper protective gear or with inconsistent safety messages. In addition to the risk of impact injuries, beware of toys with lithium batteries, such as hoverboards, which continue to be associated with fires, putting consumers at serious risk. See Trap #9 in this report for information about the potential drowning and traffic hazards associated with stand-on and ride-on toys.</p>
<p>FACTS:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One child is treated in a U.S. emergency room every three minutes for a toy-related injury.ⁱⁱ • Children have the highest rate of emergency department visits for traumatic brain (TBI) injury of all age groups. In 2014, there were approximately 812,000 TBI-related emergency department visits and 2,529 deaths among children in the U.S..ⁱⁱⁱ • Some toys can have inconsistent messaging with regard to safety gear (i.e. the packaging from the Pogo Trick Board featured on W.A.T.C.H.’s 2019 “10 Worst Toy” list, shows only two of the three children wearing helmets, and none are using other protective items, despite the manufacturer’s warning to wear a helmet and other “protective gear”). • Parents and caregivers should carefully weigh the risk of injuries from falls that may make some of these toys too inherently dangerous to be used by children. • In addition to the risk of head and impact injuries, W.A.T.C.H. continues to remind parents about the serious concern of toys with lithium batteries. There have been numerous reports of hoverboards being associated with fires, including two recent fires in one month in Massachusetts.^{iv}
<p>TO DO:</p>	<p><i>Beware of hybrid stand-on toys that invite children to glide, bounce or jump. Carefully weigh the risk of injuries from falls that potentially could make some toys too inherently dangerous to use. If children are allowed to use stand-on toys that move, beware that many are sold without the appropriate protective gear. Protective gear could minimize the risk of injuries but may not prevent all injuries. As with scooters and low-profile riding toys (see Trap #9), never let children use riding toys on pool patios where there is a risk of drowning or near traffic. For more information about toy safety, go to www.toysafety.org.</i></p>

Trap #2

Head First: Use Helmets With Bikes



<p>COVID-19 IMPACT:</p>	<p><i>A high-demand item due to increased consumer interest and supply shortage shut-downs, bikes have sold out at many retail outlets. Sales are up 121% for adult bikes. ^v</i></p>
<p>HAZARD:</p>	<p><i>Potential for Head and Impact Injuries</i></p>
<p>W.A.T.C.H. OUT!</p>	<p>Many parents looking to keep kids active and socially distanced have rediscovered biking not only for their kids, but as a family activity. To ensure a fun summer outing, make sure to adhere to appropriate safety measures when biking. The summer has the highest number of bicycle-related deaths. Always wear a properly fitted helmet when riding a bike. When not riding, children should remove their helmets. Straps from bicycle helmets worn on playgrounds can get caught on equipment leading to entanglement and other serious consequences.</p>
<p>FACTS:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since the onset of COVID-19 and the halt of many group sports and community activities, hospitals have reported a rise in injuries from biking and other activities taking place near home.^{vi} • During summer months, starting in June, bicycle-related deaths peak.^{vii} • Wearing bike helmets can reduce the risk of head injury by 60% and brain injury by 58%.^{viii} • A helmet that is cracked or has been in a crash should be replaced. • Remove helmets after biking. The CPSC has reported deaths when straps from children’s helmets snag on playground equipment or other objects. There were 34 playground-related deaths reported from 2009 to 2014. 19 deaths were from hanging or asphyxiation, 12 of which involved a second product such as a jump rope, drawstring, or helmet.^{ix} • Keep kids away from cars and other traffic while biking. In 2018, there were 289,076 bicycle-related injuries and 1,024 deaths, 682 of the deaths were motor-vehicle related.^x
<p>TO DO:</p>	<p><i>Wearing a properly fitted helmet when biking, inline skating, skateboarding or riding a scooter can reduce the risk of injury from a fall and save lives. Remove bicycle helmets while on playground equipment. For more information about toy safety, go to www.toysafety.org.</i></p>

Trap #3

Home Playgrounds: Skate Swings



<p>COVID-19 IMPACT:</p>	<p><i>Playground equipment sales rose 81% in April.</i> ^{xi}</p>
<p>HAZARD:</p>	<p>Potential for Impact or Fall Injuries</p>
<p>W.A.T.C.H. OUT!</p>	<p>This summer with playground closings and families focusing on fun activities for kids while social distancing at home, backyard playground equipment has skyrocketed in popularity. No longer just made with the traditional flat or curved seat many parents remember from grade school, swings now come in many shapes and sizes— including skate or skateboard swings, resembling a traditional skateboard with straps. Some of the products’ boxes show kids standing and swinging. Skate swings may be appealing as a convenient way to create an outdoor play area at home, but fun can turn into a hospital visit if a child falls or hits a nearby tree or other object.</p>
<p>FACTS:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From 2009 to 2014, there were 3,014 incidents associated with playground equipment reported, 2,758 (92 percent) occurred at home.^{xii} <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Most playground injuries occurred at home. (66%). ○ Falls are the most common type of injuries on playgrounds. (81%). ○ 363 of reported incidents were associated with swings. • Falls are a leading cause of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). In 2014 falls accounted for almost half (48%) of all TBI-related emergency department visits.^{xiii} • Playground surfaces should have 9 to 12 inches of wood chips, mulch, sand, pea gravel or mats made of safety-tested rubber. • In this unprecedented summer of kids spending more time playing at home due to COVID-19, families are looking for toys to engage kids and are relying on manufacturers to ensure that the toys they are putting out there are safe. • The recent recall of the Swurfer Kiwi Baby and Toddler Swings highlights the importance of making sure products are safe before reaching retail outlets. The plastic stopper on the bottom of the swing rope that holds the seat in place can detach, posing a fall hazard to the occupant.
<p>TO DO:</p>	<p><i>Beware of fall hazards associated with swings and other backyard playground equipment. Evaluate whether playground equipment, like stand-on swings, is appropriate for your child. In some instances, the safest choice may be for children to avoid the item altogether. If you purchase swings and playground equipment for your yard, read all the manufacturer’s instructions, make sure the swing is clear of any obstructions including trees, and confirm the ground covering meets playground standards. Also, beware of incomplete or inconsistent warnings and instructions for the products you purchase. For more information about toy safety, go to www.toysafety.org.</i></p>

Trap #4

Pool Toys: Water Rings and other Inflatable Water Toys



<p>COVID-19 IMPACT:</p>	<p><i>In a recent month, sales increases of 161% for pools^{xiv} reflects the increased interest in cooling down closer to home during COVID-19.</i></p>
<p>HAZARD:</p>	<p>Potential for Drowning</p>
<p>W.A.T.C.H. OUT!</p>	<p>With many camp programs closed or virtual and fewer options to keep kids entertained, parents are buying more water toys for kids to use in backyard pools— whether their own or a friendly neighbor’s. Unlike many municipal pools, backyard pools don’t have trained lifeguards keeping another set of eyes on kids at play. Water rings that fit around a child’s waist are staples at many swimming pools in the summer, but one lesser known potential hazard that parents should be aware of is the risk of tip over: If an inner tube flips over, in an instant a child can become trapped headfirst under water. Other safety traps to watch out for include larger flotation devices, such as rafts, that can block the view of a child in trouble. Keep in mind that flotation devices, such as water wings, can provide a false sense of security that a child is safe in the water.</p>
<p>FACTS:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recently, the CPSC reported a steady rise in fatal child drownings.^{xv} • Drowning is the leading cause of accidental death among children age 1 to 4 years.^{xvi} • Drowning can happen in a moment and there is often no noise to attract the attention of an adult, unlike in the movies. Closely supervise children around water. • Each year from 2015 to 2017, there were about 379 kids younger than 15 years old that died in pool- or spa-related drownings.^{xvii} • Between 2017 and 2019, about 18 children every day (estimated 6,700 children each year) were seen in hospitals for pool or spa-related non-fatal submersion injuries.^{xviii} • Water rings can tip over in an instant trapping children upside down in the water. Last year, a 3-year-old girl was caught on surveillance video almost drowning after jumping into the water with a float around her waist.^{xix} • In 2018, two 4-year-old children drowned in separate swimming pool incidents, each while playing with a water toy. A boy drowned after reaching for a pink inflatable inner tube and slid off the deck into the water. A girl drowned at the apartment complex where her family lived after being seen playing with a noodle in the 3-foot deep area of the pool.^{xx}
<p>TO DO:</p>	<p><i>A child can go from having fun in the water to being trapped under water in an instant— so remain vigilant. Diligent supervision is required around water whether or not a child is using inflatable pool toys. When it comes to water safety, check water safety procedures regularly, always supervise children, use multiple barriers of protection to prevent access to pool areas and guard against accidental drowning, and remove toys from the water that could attract children to the area. For more information about toy safety, go to www.toysafety.org.</i></p>

Trap #5

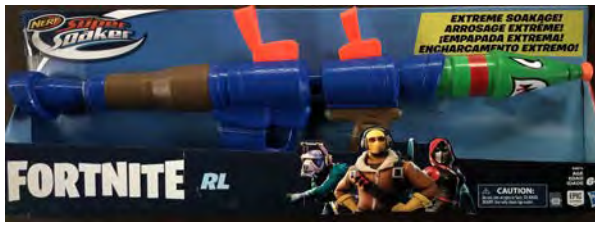
The Truth About: Trampolines



<p>COVID-19 IMPACT:</p>	<p><i>There has been a reported increase in trampoline-related injuries during the pandemic.^{xxi} The increase in sales for Outdoor and Sports Toys contributed 53% to the total growth of sales for the toy industry.^{xxii}</i></p>
<p>HAZARD:</p>	<p><i>Potential for Impact and other Catastrophic Injuries</i></p>
<p>W.A.T.C.H. OUT!</p>	<p>COVID-19 is keeping kids closer to home and closer to at-home hazards. In these unique circumstances when many parents are working from home and kids with cancelled summer programs are playing at home, families are looking for ways that kids can get their energy out without leaving the yard. Nonetheless, when it comes to backyard trampolines, parents may decide the risks outweigh the benefits. At-home trampolines, popular among children and a fixture in many backyards, have been associated with potentially catastrophic injuries. Injuries associated with trampolines have skyrocketed in recent years. Incidents include fractures, cervical spine injuries and paralysis. Injuries can be permanent and devastating for both children and their families. Netting, padding and adult supervision have not prevented the numerous injuries relating to trampoline use and may provide a false sense of security.</p>
<p>FACTS:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2019, there were an estimated 123,029 trampoline-related injuries.^{xxiii} • Trampoline-related injuries have grown significantly. In a recent four-year period between 2010 and 2014, trampoline-related injuries jumped from nearly 600 to almost 7,000.^{xxiv} • The American Academy of Pediatrics warns that home use of trampolines is dangerous for children and should be strongly discouraged.^{xxv}
<p>TO DO:</p>	<p><i>Do not have a false sense of security that a toy is safe because it is popular. Trampolines are not toys and should not be used at homes. Know the facts and what injuries may have been reported before choosing toys and activities for children. For more information about toy safety, go to www.toysafety.org.</i></p>

Trap #6

Toys that Take Aim: Water Balloon Slingshots, High-Powered Water Guns



<p>COVID-19 IMPACT:</p>	<p><i>Sales of outdoor and sports toys up \$193 Million in April, a 51% jump from the same time last year.^{xxvi}</i></p>
<p>HAZARD:</p>	<p><i>Potential for Eye Injuries and Choking Injuries</i></p>
<p>W.A.T.C.H. OUT!</p>	<p>Change in families’ daily routines as a result of COVID-19 means kids have more time to be active at home and families are relying on manufacturers more than ever to make sure their children’s toys and outdoor recreational equipment are designed and marketed with safety as a first priority. Increased sales for yard-based toys could mean increased injuries for children. Water balloon slingshots (potential for eye and choking injury), popular during warm weather play, may seem like a carefree way for kids to stay cool and stay active— but beware, they pose the potential dual threat for projectile eye injuries and small-part hazards for young children. High-powered water guns (potential for eye injury) can turn summer outdoor play into a serious matter. Some high-powered water guns have water streams that can shoot with enough force to potentially lead to contusions and other serious eye injuries. Additionally, some of these water guns are sold with inadequate or no warnings and do not provide protective eye gear.</p>
<p>FACTS:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forty-six percent of the estimated 226,100 toy-related injuries in 2018 occurred to the head and face area.^{xxvii} • Most preventable injuries to children take place near homes. • Warnings and cautions, such as “do not aim at eyes or face,” on certain water balloon slingshots and other projectile toys may be unrealistic to follow during play. • Some water balloon launchers are marketed as “slingshots” on the box and states their launching distance. One example boasts it can “launch... up to 130 ft/40m!” • Balloons left behind could be a potential hazard for young children. Children have died from injuries associated with uninflated toy balloons and pieces of broken balloons. The CPSC has reported that of all children’s products, balloons are the leading cause of suffocation death.^{xxviii} • Balloons are well-known by the toy industry to pose a significant risk of choking. For example, one water balloon slingshot sold to children “6+” includes various warnings and cautions including, “CHOKING HAZARD-Children under 8 years can choke or suffocate on uninflated or broken balloons. Adult supervision required...” • Slingshots can shoot ammunition with great force. Some state regulations prohibit the sale of weaponry such as slingshots.^{xxix}
<p>TO DO:</p>	<p><i>When it comes to protecting kids from potentially serious eye injuries, beware of slingshots capable of forcibly firing water balloons and high-powered water guns or other projectile toys that may have enough force to injure an eye. Watch out for balloons that could be choking hazards for young children. Read all instructions and warnings before giving a toy to a child; stay clear of games with instructions and warnings that may be unrealistic to follow in the real world. For more information about toy safety, go to www.toysafety.org.</i></p>

Trap #7

In-Ground Water Slides: Lawn Slip and Slides



<p>COVID-19 IMPACT:</p>	<p><i>Organized sports on hold means more time to be active near home. Sports activities and games see a 25% gain.^{xxx} With families’ increased dependence on toys to engage their children during the coronavirus pandemic, there is increased reliance on the safety of these products.</i></p>
<p>HAZARD:</p>	<p>Potential for neck, spine, head and other life-threatening injuries</p>
<p>W.A.T.C.H. OUT!</p>	<p>Families still playing catch-up from business closings, transitioning to home offices, schools going virtual, and cancelled summer camps, are turning to their backyards to keep kids busy. The focus on in-home games popular with kids while social distancing will likely switch to outdoor and yard-based activities with the warmer weather. Toys that combine water with active play for the coming hot summer days, such as lawn slip and slides (aka in-ground water slides), may seem like an inviting way to cool down and keep kids busy. However, many teens and adults may not know that serious neck injury and paralysis have resulted from using backyard water slides designed for use by children under a certain height and weight.</p>
<p>FACTS:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were an estimated 226,100 toy-related injuries in the U.S. in 2018 and a reported 43 children died from toy-related incidents from 2016 to 2018.^{xxxii} • Adults and teens have been warned not to use these products as life-threatening injuries, including paralysis, have resulted. • 1993: Slip ‘N Slides by WHAM-O were recalled after reports that seven adults and a 13-year-old teenager suffered neck injuries, quadriplegia, or paraplegia while using the water slides. CPSC warns consumers that these popular summertime toys for children should not be used by adults or teenagers due to the risk of neck injury and paralysis.^{xxxii} • 2012: Liquid Motion waterslides were recalled after an adult injured his neck.^{xxxiii} • 2017: A father of two was paralyzed after using a Slip N’ Slide at a family barbecue.^{xxxiv} • Some lawn slides contain cautions similar to this: “Because of the weight and height, older children and adults risk spine, neck, head or other life-threatening injuries from using this slide.” • Because of their weight and height, adults and teenagers who dive onto such water slides could potentially hit the ground or another obstruction with enough force to cause permanent spinal cord injury, resulting in quadriplegia or paraplegia.
<p>TO DO:</p>	<p>Know the risks: Serious injuries have been associated with in-ground water slides, including paralysis. Read all instructions and warnings, including specifications about a participant’s height and weight. For more information about toy safety, go to www.toysafety.org.</p>

Trap #8

Shallow Water: Baby Pools and Baby Pool Sprinklers



<p>COVID-19 IMPACT:</p>	<p><i>Water/sand toys and accessories sales are up 47%.^{xxxv}</i></p>
<p>HAZARD:</p>	<p><i>Potential for Drowning</i></p>
<p>W.A.T.C.H. OUT!</p>	<p>Due to COVID-19 distancing guidelines and delayed pool municipality openings, families are trading in summer days at populated pools and beaches in favor of yard-based options to cool down. This summer with families spending more time at home, it’s important to remember that most fatal drownings take place at homes during the summer^{xxxvi} and to raise awareness about the many overlooked and unexpected water traps in backyards. Portable and convenient to assemble, baby pools are a hot item this summer. Although some baby pool sprinklers are marketed as “safer” because they are shallower than other pools, families should be reminded that young children can drown in as little as two inches of water. Baby pools and other water games are often left filled with water without barriers to prevent access. Water in backyard baby pools and other places with shallow water, such as pool covers, buckets and fountains, may be inviting to children, but can potentially and tragically lead to drowning. The number of children that drown in backyard pools each summer highlights the importance of raising awareness about water safety.</p>
<p>FACTS:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water as shallow as two inches can be a drowning hazard for young children. • Most child drownings happen during the summer months.^{xxxvii} • Most drownings occur at homes (victim’s home, a family or friend’s house, or a neighbor’s house).^{xxxviii} • Backyards are filled with hidden water hazards. Children have drowned in water that collects in unexpected places, such as saggy pool covers and buckets. • A report for non-pool/ non-spa injury statistics, which typically involve smaller bodies of water such as buckets and fountains, emphasized the seriousness of the risk that even shallow water poses to children: From 2006 to 2010, there were 434 deaths and 233 injuries to children under 5-years-old from non-pool and non-spa related submersions. 92% of these injuries and deaths occurred at home.^{xxxix}
<p>TO DO:</p>	<p><i>Beware of the risk of drowning from shallow water. Never leave baby pools and other containers with water unattended in your backyard and empty after each use. Beware of rainwater that can collect in baby pools and other containers. Water safety procedures are important, can save lives, and should be revisited regularly. For more information about toy safety, go to www.toysafety.org</i></p>

Trap #9

On the Move: Non-Motorized Scooters and Riding Toys



<p>COVID-19 IMPACT:</p>	<p><i>The growth in sales in the Skate/Skateboards/Scooters category of 107% in April from the same time last year was a significant contributing factor to the jump in sales for the Outdoor and Sports Toys supercategory, according the NPD Group research firm.^{xi}</i></p>
<p>HAZARD:</p>	<p>Potential for Fall, Head, Impact Injuries & Drowning</p>
<p>W.A.T.C.H. OUT!</p>	<p>While managing social isolation at home, one way to keeping kids safe and entertained is to know what toys have been associated with injuries in the past. Traditional non-motorized scooters earned a place as one of this summer’s top hazards because, for another year in a row, this popular toy is responsible for the most toy-related injuries. Some plastic tricycles and other wheeled riding toys are designed low to the ground and are particularly difficult for motorists to see in driveways and near roads. Also, pool patios and wheeled riding toys are a combination to avoid as children have died after falling from riding toys into pools. Always use appropriate safety gear, such as helmets and other protective padding, and never let children ride near traffic.</p>
<p>FACTS:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2018, an estimated 39,500 children under 15 years old were treated in emergency rooms for injuries associated with non-motorized scooters.^{xli} • From 2016 to 2018, there were 7 reported deaths involving non-motorized scooters and motor vehicles to children 12-years-old and younger.^{xlii} • Children on scooters and other riding toys have died when hit by cars in driveways and on roads. A 7-year-old boy died after he was riding a scooter on a driveway and was hit by a vehicle driven by a relative.^{xliii} • Children have fallen into pools while using scooters and riding toys. A 22-month-old boy drowned in an apartment complex swimming pool after he drove his small 4-wheeler into the pool.^{xliiv}
<p>TO DO:</p>	<p><i>The number of injuries from non-motorized scooters may be a compelling reason to avoid these toys altogether. But if your child is allowed to use non-motorized scooters, never let the child ride near traffic or without the proper safety gear. Low-profile riding toys should not be used near driveways and roads where motorists may not be able to see them or on pool patios where there is a risk of drowning. Always wear helmets and appropriate protective gear when using wheeled toys. For more information about toy safety, go to www.toysafety.org.</i></p>

Trap #10

Choking: Toys With Small Parts



COVID-19 IMPACT:	<i>The total U.S. toy industry grew 22% in April.</i> ^{xlv}
HAZARD:	<i>Potential for choking injuries</i>
W.A.T.C.H. OUT!	<p>With fewer options for summer fun within communities, kids are using recreational products more often and families are depending on these products to be safe. There have been numerous recalls addressing the issue of toys with parts that can detach, posing a choking hazard to young children. Although a year-round concern, toys with small parts have earned a place as a summer safety trap due to the continuing production and recalls of these types of toys. These hidden hazards, difficult for parents to identify at the time of purchase, must be prevented with better design and pre-market testing before they reach toy store shelves. The Musical Lili Llama was recalled (April 2020) because the screws used to attach the spinning flowers to the sides of the toy can become loose and fall off, posing a choking hazard. W.A.T.C.H.'s 2019 nominees for the "10 Worst Toys" list included a miniature yellow school bus with rubber tires that could be removed presenting the potential for a serious choking injury for oral age children. Despite W.A.T.C.H.'s sustained efforts over the years, toys with small parts continue to put young children in danger.</p>
FACTS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every three minutes, a child sustains a toy-related injury.^{xlvi} • Recent recalls of toys due to choking hazards, such as the Musical Lili Llama, are evidence of the continued problem of toys with small parts sold to young children. • Already this year in a four-month period, there have been twenty (20) recalls representing over six million (6,008,105) units of toys and other children's products polluting the market in the U.S..^{xlvii} Recalls were issued for hazards including fall, choking, lead poisonings, entrapment, lacerations, and intestinal obstruction
TO DO:	<p><i>Become familiar with the types of choking and ingestion hazards associated with toy injuries and deaths in the past. Check toys for pieces that could easily break off, long slender parts, and soft materials that could be ingested and block a young child's airway. With all children's toys and products, research the item's safety history and check for recalls and reviews at www.cpsc.gov and www.saferproducts.gov. For more information about toy safety, go to www.toysafety.org.</i></p>

Photos/ Visual Representations: Regarding toy/recreational activity photos available on the W.A.T.C.H., Inc.'s website (www.toysafety.org), please note: The photos and images relating to the summer safety press release and press conference are used for visual aid purposes only, and are not intended to focus on a specific manufacturer, distributor, retailer or product. Rather, these images and photos represent categories of potential summer safety traps. The Summer Safety list of hazards differs from W.A.T.C.H.'s annual "10 Worst Toys" List released in November for the holiday season, which identifies specific products that are representative of types of hazards in the marketplace. **Products:** Any reference to, or photographic representation of, specific products herein neither constitutes nor implies a recommendation or a criticism of such products, but rather is used only as visual examples to aid in the discussion of the types of potential hazards discussed.

W.A.T.C.H., Inc. is a non-profit organization working to educate the public about child safety. W.A.T.C.H. helps raise awareness about the dangers lurking in many toys, children's products, and recreational activities. Noted trial attorneys, authors and consumer advocates, Edward Swartz (1934-2010), James Swartz, Joan Siff and W.A.T.C.H. have been responsible for the **"10 WORST TOYS" nominees** released for over 46 years as well as a **Summer Safety Report** addressing summer hazards for children. For more information on W.A.T.C.H. and the press conference, please visit www.toysafety.org or follow us @WATCH safety on Twitter and Facebook.

Joan E. Siff, President of W.A.T.C.H. & Board Member, Franciscan Children's.

James A. Swartz, Director of W.A.T.C.H., noted trial attorney, author and consumer advocate.

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